

PRESS RELEASE

## **CISLAC condemns military invasion of Daily Trust Newspapers**

The Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) condemns in totality the undemocratic response and excessive intimidation deployed by Nigerian Army to frustrate democracy and freedom of press that metamorphosed in unconstitutional invasion of Daily Trust Office in Maiduguri with subsequent arrest of some staff of the outfit.

While democratic system provides an enabling ground for citizenry participation and involvement in governance, proactive press remains a veritable platform linking the people with emerging development in governance through public presentation of facts, and articulation or publication of findings without fear or favour.

We are surprised that after about two decades of Nigeria's return into democratic system, enabling instrument of democracy like freedom of press remains a difficult thing to achieve, despite the provision of Section 39(1) of the Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria that, "Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference."

We are not unaware that Section 39(2) grants every person the right to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions subject to laws enacted by the National Assembly.

We are seriously disturbed by the persistent but unchecked violation of the rule of law in recent times by security agencies including unjustifiable threats against vital instruments of democracy and human rights in the country.

We are concerned by the existing high-handed response deploy by security agencies to civil issues and their level of misconducts, creating public doubt about their readiness and credibility to sincerely conduct themselves appropriately in 2019 general elections without fear or favour.

We are also perturbed by the recent increased violence and insecurity the country, and the growing desperation among political parties clamouring for power in 2019 with resultant tension and uncertainty in political atmosphere.

CISLAC therefore, demands immediate release of the undemocratically arrested personnel of Daily Trust Newspapers, while calling for adequate oversight activities by relevant legislative Committees in the National Assembly on the conducts of military agents across the country.

CISLAC calls on all political parties to strictly adhere to the rules of law and respect for the press freedom and human rights in their political dealings as the nation trends towards 2019 general elections.

CISLAC further encourages the media and general public to continuously upholding democratic core values without fear or favour.

Signed:

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